

U.S. Military Academy - Artillery Barracks  
(Company Headquarters and Barracks)  
West side of Knox Road, near the southern end  
of Buffalo Soldier's Field  
U.S. Military Academy  
West Point  
Orange County  
New York

HABS No. NY-5708-27

HABS  
NY  
36-WEPD  
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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, DC 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

U.S. MILITARY ACADEMY - ARTILLERY BARRACKS  
(COMPANY HEADQUARTERS AND BARRACKS)

127-  
36-06A

LOCATION: West side of Knox Road, near the southern end of Buffalo Soldier Field, U.S. Military Academy, West Point, Orange County, New York.

USGS

PRESENT OWNER  
AND OCCUPANT: U.S. Military Academy, Department of the Army.

PRESENT USE: Enlisted men's barracks.

SIGNIFICANCE: The Artillery Barracks is one of a group of five Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson buildings that define the western and southern edges of Buffalo Soldier Field. The neo-gothic character of the buildings create a cohesive group and reflect the general style of the firm's work at the Academy. Although their original function no longer exists, the five buildings are symbolic of an historic military tradition.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1904-1908.
2. Architect: Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson, Architects, Boston and New York.
3. Original and subsequent owners: U.S. Military Academy, Department of the Army.
4. Builder: Church Construction Company. The Church Company defaulted on construction and the work was finished by the bonding company.
5. Original plans and construction: Consult original Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson drawings in the Facilities Engineer's Office, U.S. Military Academy, for the original interior arrangement. As a unit the buildings cost \$547,107.

The Annual Report of 1909 mentions the site work: "The work of grading, top soiling, and seeding the new artillery and cavalry drill ground, at the south end of the post, was completed early in June, with the exception of a small portion in the vicinity of the south gate guardhouse,

which had to be postponed until the stonecutting yard of one of the contractors could be removed. This was done early in July, and the grading of the new drill ground practically completed by August 1. A good growth of pasture grass has been obtained, which it is believed will withstand the wear and tear of mounted drill sufficiently to prevent the annoyance from dust that usually occurred when the old ground was used."

6. Alterations and additions: In 1919 the north and south end wings were added to the building. These were designed by Arthur B. Proctor, Captain in the Quartermaster Corps. "The first plan changes occurred in 1958 and again in 1974 when a major rehabilitation took place that greatly altered the original plan and finishes. The original 6/6 double-hung sash was replaced with 1/1 single-hung sash in 1980." (Grashof)

- B. Historical Context: The Artillery Barracks was designed as part of a group which consisted of the Cavalry Barracks (HABS No. NY-5708-28), the Artillery Stables (HABS No. NY-5708-46), the Cavalry Stables (HABS No. NY-5708-47) and the Gun Shed (HABS No. NY-5708-56). These were grouped around the "Cavalry and Artillery Plain" where instruction was given. The area was renamed Buffalo Soldier Field after the Ninth Cavalry detachment of black cavalymen assigned to West Point in 1907. For the historical context of this area within the overall development of West Point see HABS No. NY-5708, Volume 2: "West Point: An Overview of the History and Physical Development of the United States Military Academy."

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The Artillery Barracks is representative of the work of Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson at the U.S. Military Academy in the first decade of the 20th century. The brick exterior walls with limestone detailing, the protruding brick "buttresses" around the entry "sallyport" and the varied chimney masses combine to strongly create a "Gothic" appearance that was highly distinctive on a campus that, at that time, was composed of a wide variety of architectural styles. Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson was, without doubt, the most prominent architectural firm at West Point in this century. Their work is a clear reflection of the "medievalist" craftsman philosophy of Ralph Adams Cram. This is seen not only in their other buildings at the Academy, but also in their later work nationally.
2. Condition of fabric: The building is in good condition.

### B. Description of the Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The Artillery Barracks is essentially a "T" shaped building with a rectangular crossing mass in the stem of the T, two small projecting masses under the arms of the T, and closing end masses at the ends of the arms. The length of the building along the arms, or crossing, is approximately 280'-0", while its width is 32'-0". The stem of the T is 108' long and 38' wide. The end pavilions

in the crossing, measuring 32' x 46', are cross gable units which reflect the cross gable of the entry "sallyport," and help define the barracks as an architectural whole. The long veranda along the front (east) facade of the building, with segmentally arched openings framed by protruding brick piers helps maintain a medieval flavor while tying the extension of the crossing into the central entry mass. Except for the three story cross gable entry mass, the building is two stories tall. The Artillery Barracks is 21 bays along its front facade (the crossing of the T) and 9 bays along the length of the extension to the rear.

2. Foundation: Concrete with granite water table.
3. Walls: The exterior walls of the Artillery Barracks are a red brick laid in a Flemish bond with brick and limestone detailing.

"Buttressing" elements are created on the entry "sallyport" by protruding brick courses. Brick segmental arches composed of headers and stretchers span the main veranda openings, while a brick pointed arch spans the main entry opening.

Limestone is used extensively for the trim on the barracks including the lintels and sills of the windows, the keystones in the arched openings, for beltcourses, for the parapet capping and for a cap to the brick pointed arch at the main entry.

The wall above the entry displays the only exterior embellishment, with two recessed limestone panels with carved shields flanking the third story windows and one carved limestone panel in the gable peak with crossed cannons and the letters "USMA."

4. Structural systems: Load bearing brick walls with brick facing were the only readily apparent structural systems observed.
5. Verandas, chimneys: Two eight bay verandas flank the main entry projection, running north to south along the front wall of the barracks. They are flat roofed and have brick piers with limestone thrust elements, keystones and parapet.

Five chimneys exist on the Artillery Barracks: two incorporated into the north and south sides of the three story entry pavilion, one each on the western end of the projecting masses under the arms of the "T" and one incorporated into the western wall of the stem of the building's "T". The chimneys have segmentally arched openings with limestone trim and keystones and copper louvered vents filling the openings. The brickwork on the chimneys step out to create a vertical "buttressing" effect.

6. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: The original arched main doorway has been replaced by a large limestone lintel with paired metal and glass doors leading into the building. Other doorways leading into the building have been recently added or altered.

- b. Windows: Although most original window openings remain (some have been converted into doorways), the windows have been recently replaced by metal one-over-one double-hung light sash.
- 7. Roof:
  - a. Shape and covering: The gable roof is covered with multi-colored slate placed in a random pattern.
  - b. Cornice: The building has a plain limestone cornice.
- C. Description of the Interior: The interior of the Artillery Barracks has been gutted and rebuilt, and was not surveyed.
- D. Site:
  - 1. General setting and orientation: The Artillery Barracks is oriented to the east, fronting on Knox Road. Situated on a slight rise above Buffalo Soldier Field, the building helps define the southwestern edge of that large, level field. A stone retaining wall is located in front of the southeastern facade to create a flat terrace for the building to sit on. To the north of the building, immediately across a service road, is a swimming pool/park area with land that rises slightly to the west, and has deciduous trees scattered about. To the west of the Artillery Barracks, immediately across Wilson Road, the land rises sharply in a heavily wooded hillside. To the south, the land also rises, although gently, and is covered with a variety of trees.

### PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Architectural Drawings: Original ink-on-linen working drawings are in the Facilities Engineer's Office, Directorate of Engineering and Housing, U.S. Military Academy. Subsequent alteration drawings are also found there.
- B. Early Views: Early photographs can be found in the U.S. Military Academy Archives and Special Collections. Some of these are reproduced in the Grashof and Lange volumes of this project.
- C. Bibliography:
  - 1. Primary and unpublished sources: Records, U.S. Military Academy Archives and Special Collections. See bibliographic essay in the Lange volume of this project for a listing of record groups.
  - 2. Secondary and published sources:

Annual Reports, U.S. Military Academy Archives.

Grashof, Bethanie C. "Building Analysis and Preservation Guidelines for Category I and Selected Category II Buildings at the United States Military Academy, West Point, New York," Historic American Buildings Survey, 1983. HABS No. NY-5708.

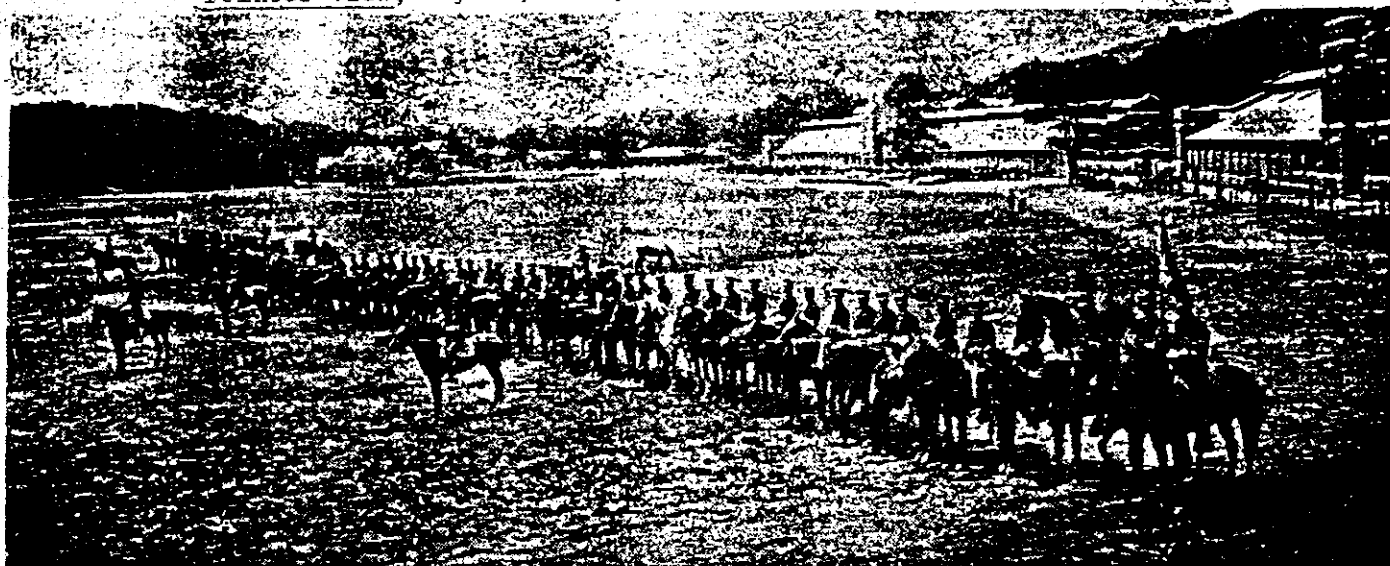
Lange, Robie S. "West Point: An Overview of the History and Physical Development of the United States Military Academy," Historic American Buildings Survey, 1983. HABS No. NY-5708.

D. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated: The records of Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson.

E. Supplemental Material:

1. "Saga of the 'Buffalo Soldiers,'" Pointer View, May 18, 1973.

1. "Saga of the 'Buffalo Soldiers'" from the  
Pointer View, May 18, 1973, U.S. Military Academy Archives



Part of Ninth Cavalry's "Buffalo Soldiers" assigned to West Point in 1910. Bldgs. 622 and 626 were then stables. (USMA Archives)

## Recounted for Armed Forces ceremonies

# Saga of the 'Buffalo Soldiers'

For 20 years after the Civil War two black cavalry regiments wrestled the West — from the Dakotas to the Rio Grande — wrangling with hostile Indians, bandits, cattle thieves, murderous gunmen, bootleggers, trespassers, and Mexican revolutionaries.

Near the turn of the century both regiments galloped into the war with Spain, storming San Juan Hill with the Rough Riders and joining the siege of Santiago.

Yet the black cavalrymen — dubbed "Buffalo Soldiers" by Indian warriors who learned to respect the dogged Black soldiers — rode quietly and inconspicuously through the chapters of American history.

One of their last rides in the early 1900's brought them to West Point where they turned to training cadets in horsemanship.

Today the Cavalry is gone and the stables are offices. But the name becomes a permanent fixture when West Point salutes the Buffalo Soldiers in Armed Forces Day ceremonies at 1:30 p.m., Saturday. Cavalry Plain, now an athletic field at the south end of West Point, will be dedicated and renamed Buffalo Soldier Field.

Former members of the Ninth and Tenth U.S. Cavalry Regiments and members of the Ninth and Tenth Cavalry Association will attend the ceremonies on the field along with local dignitaries. LTG William

A. Knowlton, USMA Superintendent, will deliver the keynote address.

The ceremonies will only be a part of Armed Forces Day activities planned for West Point and Highland Falls. (See box).

A regiment of cadets is also expected to join marching units in the Armed Forces Day Parade in New York City.

The remarkable story of the unheralded

Buffalo Soldiers' efforts in taming the West unfolds in William H. Leckie's book, *The Buffalo Soldier*.

Leckie noted in his study that "in thousands of pages the Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Cavalry, great regiments all, rode and fought their way to glory, but the Negro troopers were usually dismissed with a bare mention, ignored completely, or their efforts mocked."

"Many a frontier official owed his life and his job to the support given him by these Black men in blue."

As the Indian Wars subsided, Buffalo Soldiers played an integral role in the War with Spain. They fought in the Philippines and Cuba. General Pershing, who earned his nickname of Black Jack by leading Black troops in the West, was proud of his Black troops in the Santiago campaign. Colonel Teddy Roosevelt later wrote, "The 9th and 10th Cavalry Regiments fought one on either side of mine at Santiago, and I wish no better men beside me in battle than these colored troops showed themselves to be."

In 1907 a detachment of the Ninth Cavalry was assigned to West Point in support of cadet riding instruction and mounted drill, which was conducted on the ground now known as Cavalry Plain.

In 1931 it was replaced by the 2nd Squadron of the Tenth Cavalry which remained at West Point until its de-activation in 1946.

## Tomorrow's slate

TIME	EVENT
10 a.m.-4 p.m.	Equipment Display at Buffalo Soldier Field.
1:30 p.m.	Dedication Ceremony & Cadet Review at Buffalo Soldier Field.
2:15 p.m.	Demonstration by Cadet Riding Club at Buffalo Soldier Field.
3:30 p.m.	Sky Diving Demonstration by Cadet Parachute Club at Buffalo Soldier Field.
9 a.m.-5 p.m.	Spring Sidewalk Sale and Arts Festival in Highland Falls.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This documentation is part of a multi-year project sponsored by the National Park Service and the United States Military Academy, explained in the United States Military Academy, HABS No. NY-5708, Volume 1, "Methodology." This written documentation was prepared by Travis C. McDonald, Jr. and Timothy Lindblad, architectural historians, in 1984-1985 based on fieldwork conducted in 1984.